

Inequity hawks SC education

When first researching a story comparing and contrasting high school coaching pay in North and South Carolina, I immediately set about trying to dig up some alarming statistics about South Carolina's educational system. By and large though I was unable to find anything like that.

I wanted to see if South Carolina paid its football coaches better because they didn't care about their kids' educations. Almost immediately, such stereotypical notions were thrown to the wind. But the Palmetto State's way of doing things markedly differs from the way North Carolina approaches the task of educating its children.

South Carolina has a decentralized education system, one that puts control in the hands of locally elected school boards. In contrast, North Carolina has a system more heavily regulated by the State Board of Education. North Carolina's education system is run from the top down while our neighbor's is run from the bottom up.

Comparing the two states to economies, South Carolina's localized education system would be capitalist, allowing some districts to thrive while others perpetually struggle. It's a sink or swim environment, one where your home address weighs heavily in whether college is a realistic goal or not.

I would consider North Carolina's statewide system more similar to a socialist construct. A central office makes many of the decisions, leaving less power for the individual school systems. Yet, such a system helps enable poorer, underperforming districts more so than South Carolina. The system is more stable, but also very bureaucratic, as any North Carolina teacher who has ever made a maintenance request will confirm.

But neither system should be termed right or wrong, good or bad. The only way to measure either is the effectiveness they have in producing a quality education for students.

See North Carolina, page 6C



Bret McCormick

Part 2: Why Gordon Walters, other coaches, are lured to South Carolina Economy makes matching SC pay almost impossible

By Bret McCormick
Sports Editor

After looking at the disparities among high school coaching salaries in North and South Carolina, it's easier to understand why former South Brunswick football coach Gordon Walters would leave for South Carolina.

Unique characteristics of South Carolina's education system allow some districts there to pay head football coaches extremely well. Twenty-three districts in the state have almost complete fiscal autonomy — they can raise taxes in their district should they encounter a

Lexington District 1

Allen Sitterle (Lexington)- \$101,260
Ben Freeman (Pelion) ----- \$89,948
Barry Harley (Gilbert)----- \$89,698
Mark Cagle (White Knoll)---\$79,000

budget shortfall. Every South Carolina school district determines its own pay scales, regardless of fiscal autonomy. That enables some to pay coaches handsome salaries, while others choose not to.

White Knoll High School, where Walters will be coaching starting in July, is in Lexington School District One. There they

Brunswick County

Jimmy Fletcher (West)----- \$57,010
Garry Bishop (North)----- \$50,075
Gordon Walters (South)---- \$46,900

are able to pay head football coaches an average salary of just under \$90,000 per year.

Compare that figure with Brunswick County's \$51,000 average salary and it's easy to see why Walters made his decision.

Iconic 1990s rapper Mac Dre said it

best when he said, "Don't hate the player, hate the game." Part two of this series examines the game and its players a little closer.

Raiding neighbors

So what's stopping South Carolina from continually pillaging North Carolina for its best coaching talent?

Not much really. That fact irks South Brunswick athletic director Chris Roehner, who expressed his frustration.

"I've been doing this 12 years and we've gone through numerous coaches and the one thing that Brunswick

See Gaps, page 5C



Jonathan Marvin beat this tag at second and also narrowly avoided being stomped on by the East Columbus infielder. Marvin hit a home run later in the week during a 10-7 win over Pender, while South won this game against the Gators thanks to an eighth inning walk-off three-run homer by Garrett Rayfield.

Photo by Jim Harper

Cougar pair leads surge

Rayfield, Marvin help propel Cougars to two league wins

By Bret McCormick
Sports Editor

An offensive power surge pushed South Brunswick to a pair of Waccamaw Conference baseball wins last week. Tuesday, the Cougs dramatically edged out East Columbus in extra innings behind a Garrett Rayfield walk-off three-run home run and then Friday South knocked off Pender 10-7 in Burgaw to start league play 2-0.

Rayfield's homer was his second in two games and Jonathan Marvin hit a jack against Pender on Friday to help South overcome two decent conference opponents.

Neither player was counted on for over the fence hits at the beginning of the year, but both are becoming reliable sources of big hits lately.

"I only hit one home run last year," said Marvin. "I've just been watching the ball well and controlling my swing."

Another crucial boon for the Cougs was Brian Wells' return from illness that held him out the week prior. Wells delivered a decent start against East Columbus allowing five runs on three hits while striking out six. Friday, Wells threw five innings in relief of Tyler Carlson, striking out three batters while only allowing a single hit and run.

That effort allowed South to take their fourth straight win after dropping the first four ballgames of the year during a difficult non-conference schedule.

"It's good to win conference games especially and that's what our guys' focus is," said coach Lee Shelton. "If we win some preseason games so be it, but if you go undefeated in preseason and don't win any conference games you don't go to the playoffs."

Tuesday's win was a big boost for South as they started league play with an exciting win. East Columbus brought a potent offense to Boiling Spring Lakes and they didn't disappoint onlookers. Demetrius McKelvie, a monster of a senior headed to Marshall University on a

See Offense, page 4C

Greg Gilbert ready to be a Camel

Senior defensive back signs with Campbell's second-year program

By Bret McCormick
Sports Editor

South Brunswick senior Greg Gilbert developed a reputation last autumn as an athletic playmaker and that rep garnered him an offer from Campbell University several weeks ago to play football. As soon as the letter of intent arrived at South, Gilbert signed on the dotted line, committing his future to the Camels for the next four years.

"They told me to come out to the school to see if I liked it and I went out there and I liked it. So, the following week they sent me a letter of intent and I signed that and they said 'how does it feel to be a Camel,' and I said it feels good."

Gilbert finished 2008 with six interceptions including two clutch picks in South's win over West Brunswick, one of which was returned 50 yards for a touchdown, and a pick that clinched a win over Cardinal Gibbons on the last play of the contest the following week.

On offense, the explosive track star caught four passes, including a touchdown against Fayetteville Christian. Gilbert also rushed the ball 14 times for 92 yards and two more touchdowns, both end-arounds that showcased his speed and elusiveness.

Gilbert enjoyed playing offense and defense in high school but his biggest impact in college will likely be made as a cornerback or safety picking off passes instead of as a receiver or runner.

"The head coach wants met to play DB for them and he said I'm definitely not redshirting my freshman year so I've got a good chance of starting because they like my highlight tape."

Additionally, last season was the first season that Campbell played competitive football since 1950 when the school was a junior college.

See Gilbert, page 4C

'The head coach wants met to play DB for them and he said I'm definitely not redshirting my freshman year so I've got a good chance of starting.'

South Brunswick's Greg Gilbert



This was the first of two interceptions South Brunswick senior Greg Gilbert made in his last game against West Brunswick last fall. Gilbert ran one pick back for a touchdown, clinching the Cougs' second straight win over their rivals from Shallotte. The athletic defensive back finished the 2008 season with six interceptions.

Photo by Jim Harper



Richard Weinacht shot an 80 on his neighborhood course. He recovered well from a ball in the water on the second hole.

Photo by Bret McCormick

Golfers dominate at The Lakes

By Bret McCormick
Sports Editor

Paced by Dalton Gore's 1-under par round, South Brunswick hammered Waccamaw Conference competition Monday afternoon at The Lakes Country Club. The blustery conditions led to some higher than usual scores, though Gore was largely unaffected.

South accumulated a team score of 318, 46 strokes ahead of second placed Whiteville's 364. North Brunswick took third with a 383,

See Golf team, page 5C